

Singer Peter Frampton makes the pieces fit

ROCK ON



ETHLIE ANN VARE

"There was Frampton, then there was punk, then there was rap, and now there's Frampton again," says Peter Frampton, the once (and possibly future) mega-star of rock 'n' roll. Don't worry. He's laughing as he says it.



Peter Frampton

Now pushing 40, the father of two and a veteran of 25 years in the music business, Peter Frampton takes a fairly lighthearted look at the industry he once dominated. His 1975 double album "Frampton Comes Alive" became the best-selling album in history (it has since been beaten), and his hit singles, like "Show Me The Way" and "Do You Feel Like We Do," topped the charts throughout most of 1976.

But now it's almost 1990, and it's the Peter Frampton we saw as David Bowie's back-up guitar player who is releasing the album "When All the Pieces Fit." It's a whole new ballgame.

"What else am I going to do?" queries the affable singer. "Retire at 39? There is the question of money: I made a huge amount of money in this business, but a lot of it was spent for me."

"So I've started all over again. And I'm enjoying it. I'm enjoying myself more now than I was even after 'Alive.' There was so much pressure then."

Pressure, overexposure ... in the late '70s, Frampton was a prisoner of his own fame. "We did everything, and we did it three times," he smiles. "People magazine, Rolling Stone ... we didn't say no to anything. It was badly handled. The mystery was gone."

"I think there ought to be an equation between how many copies an album sells, and how many years you've got to wait before you can release the next one!"



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After the burn-out came the slow re-entry. Frampton took '82 to '86 off, then released a modest album, "Promotion," before hooking up with Bowie to simply play. "I learned a lot from David," he says. "I learned that things don't just take care of themselves. You've got to oversee everything."

"With this record, I've written the songs, produced the record, even done a bit of engineering and worked with the artist on the cover. I've never been so closely involved."

He likes the new disc, much of which he recorded at his studio in Los Angeles, and was delighted when "Holding on to You" started getting some radio action.

"The only problem is, with radio going to this classic rock format, I'm more likely to hear 14 minutes of 'Do You Feel Like We Do' than I am four minutes, 18 seconds of 'Holding on to You.'"

"But I win both ways, really." That's a typically balanced statement from a hot-blooded pin-up boy who has somehow managed to become a level-headed adult, despite all the pressure and notoriety. He's come to terms with fame, and decided he can pretty much take it or leave it.

"You know what I'd like to do? I'd like to produce. I'm quite a good producer," he says. "I'd like to find someone, work with them, co-write with them, help them get their first record out. To take it from nowhere and have a slight success."

"Because I wouldn't wish a huge success on anybody."

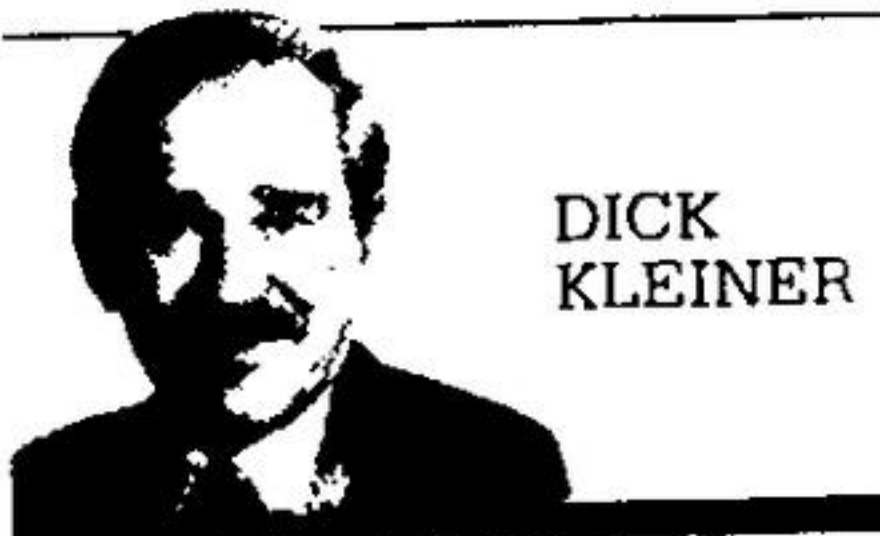


What must TV contestants prove?

Q. Please explain the statement shown on the TV screen at the end of game shows — "All contestants must be able to meet eligibility requirements." — M.M., Dansville, N.Y.

A. That is a legal thing, giving the TV game shows an "out" in case they later find, among other things, that the winning contestant was a pro, or had violated any of the show's rules (such as not having appeared on some other game show within a certain period of time). Then they can legally demand that the prize money be refunded.

ASK DICK KLEINER



DICK KLEINER

Q. In 1931, on a train from Los Angeles to El Paso, I made the acquaintance of Warner Baxter, who was en route to a location for "The Cisco Kid." The train was wrecked on the desert, and Baxter helped pass the time with conversation. He told me he had played the butler in "City Lights" with Charlie Chaplin. Friends later told me that was impossible, and he was just "having me on." Can you tell me if that was the case? — H.E.W., Ventura, Calif.

A. I think maybe he was having you on. None of the books about Chaplin or Baxter mentions that fact, and the credits for "City Lights" do not include his name.

Q. I am 14, and I recently watched "Gone With the Wind" for the first time. I know Clark Gable (Rbett Butler) is dead, but what about Vivien Leigh (Scarlett O'Hara). Is she dead, too? — T.J., Little Rock, Ark.

Q. I would like to know what happened to that wonderful dancer, Bobby Van. — R.M., Hollywood, Fla.

Q. Whatever became of the fine actor, Ralph Meeker? — N.F., Ventura, Calif.

Q. Whatever happened to Gail Russell, an Elizabeth Taylor-type, who was a coming star years ago? — B.L., Lancaster, Ohio.

Q. Could you give me some information about that handsome actor, James Craig? — E.B., Columbus, Kan.

A. All of them have passed away. Q. Settle a six-pack bet. In the '52 movie "Macao," we know Robert Mitchum and William Bendix starred. I say Jane Russell was Mitchum's girl friend. My buddy says no. I know I'm right. Now you tell him I'm right. — J.T., Wyoming, Mich.

A. OK. Hey, buddy, your friend's right. Jane Russell played a singer in the film, and Robert Mitchum played the man she loved. Happy guzzling.

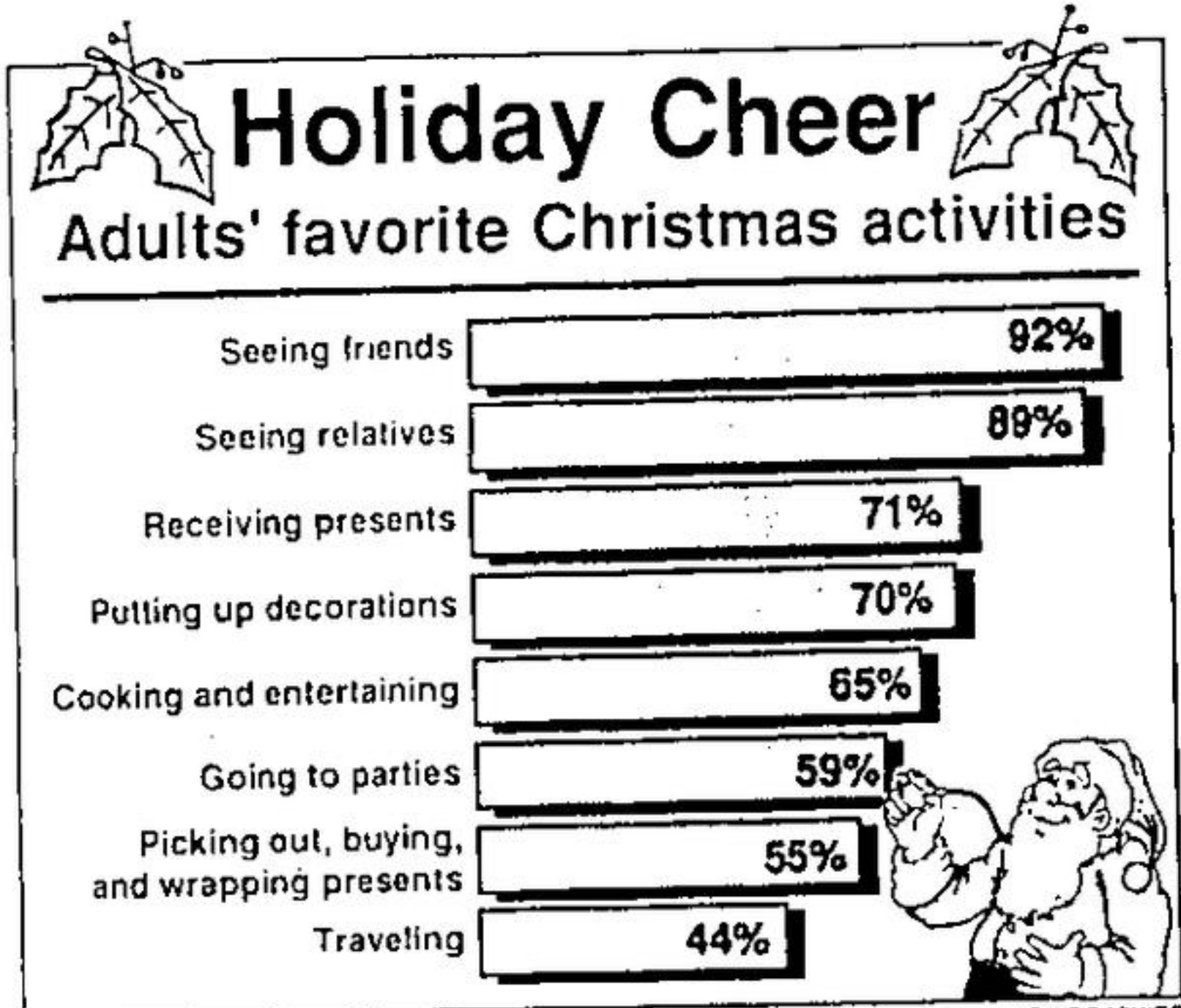
Q. I saw a '39 black-and-white movie, "The Women," with Joan Crawford and Norma Shearer. I would swear there was a color version with men in the cast later. Do you know the name of that? It's driving me crazy! — L.H., Abilene, Texas.

A. Simmer down. The color one — with men in the cast — was called "The Opposite Sex," which came out in 1956. It starred, among others, June Allyson, Ann Sheridan, Joan Blondell and Ann Miller. Besides men, it also had music. It was a remake of "The Women."



Vivien Leigh

Joan Crawford



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